

RUTHERFORD COUNTY MANAGER

County Commissioners

Julius Owens, *Chairman*

William Eckler, *Vice Chairman*

Greg Lovelace

Eddie Holland

Roger Richard

Carl Classen, *County Manager*

Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*

Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

November 8, 2013

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Weeks Ending November 8, 2013**

General:

This is a highlight of items from the previous week. It is not meant to be exhaustive but to inform the Commissioners and Department Heads.

Airport:

The Airport sold 767.5 gallons of 100LL fuel and 130 gallons of Jet A fuel. The Airport deposited \$19,024.50 for Jet A fuel from prepaid customers on October 31, and deposited \$5,000.00 for Jet A fuel from prepaid customers on November 4th.

Board of Elections:

Tuesday's Municipal Election went very smoothly. The only glitch was one of our Chief Judges was admitted to the hospital the day before, but one of our seasoned veterans, Shirley Bailey stepped up and saved the day. Thursday will be our required sample count, where we recount the paper rolls from two precincts to verify that the equipment worked correctly. Our department is looking forward to a nice long weekend!

Building Inspections:

Building Inspections has had a busy week while issuing 50 permits for a total of \$11,577 in fees. Included in those 50 permits were 5 new construction house starts. Inspectors have conducted 146 inspections while 2 inspectors have been away at continuing education courses for two days. The Director has participated in various meetings including meetings with Horsehead Executives and engineer meetings at the airport. Also this week, the department completed final inspections on 14 of the permits at Horsehead. We expect many more of these finals in the coming weeks as they close in on completion. ***On a celebratory note from Jason Ruff:*** My daughter has completed her cancer treatments and has received an all clear from the doctor today, Nov 7, 2013. Since last October, she endured 36 weeks of chemotherapy treatments and 31 radiation treatments with blazing fortitude. She will have her central port removed next week and has officially graduated to **Cancer Survivor** from Cancer Patient. Thanks so much to everyone for their continued support and prayers. God has given my family many amazing blessings through this and I am truly humbled to work with such a wonderful group as the Rutherford County Employees.

Clerk to the Board:

County Commissioners were very busy on Monday. A ribbon cutting was held at the new Revenue Office at 3:00 PM. There was a great attendance. The office is very spacious, friendly, and bright. A Special County Commissioners' Meeting was held on Monday at 5:00 PM. At this meeting, the Board announced the appointment of Sherry Lavender as Revenue Director. The special meeting was followed by the regular meeting at 6:00 PM. On Wednesday, staff members of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners visited the Department Head Meeting. They also visited the Transit Department, Revenue Department, Solid Waste Department, the Department of Social Services, and the Jail. Following a lunch discussion, several department heads and the NCACC group toured the new Blue Ridge Distillery. The Commissioners were invited to a ribbon cutting at Cohesion Phenomics in the Sunlight Building in Spindale on Thursday. The Clerk and IT Staff participated in live webinars on Granicus, the new agenda software, on Thursday and Friday. Chairman Owens and Vice Chairman Eckler attended a "Leadership Meeting" at Trelleborg Coated Systems on Friday along with other representatives of the local and state agencies who assisted in the successful location of this project.

Cooperative Extension:

Staff attended the Extension conference this week.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. Beginning the week, Mr. Classen attended the Revenue Department update meeting, attended the weekly update meeting with Danny Searcy and David Odom, which includes Greyrock and Queens Gap, attended the weekly update with James Kilgo, attended a meeting regarding Horsehead grants, attended a ribbon cutting for the Revenue Department, met with Vice –Chair Eckler regarding RPO, met with Attorney Richard Williams, Chairman Owens and Vice-Chairman Eckler to review the agenda, and attended a special meeting and regular monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Classen continued the week attending a meeting regarding EMS, attended a meeting with Attorney Beth Miller regarding Horsehead agreements, and attended a department head meeting with guests from the NCACC. Department heads and NCACC guests toured several county offices, as well as, the Blue Ridge Distillery. Moving forward, Mr. Classen attended a Western Highlands conference call, attended a meeting regarding Horsehead, attended a ribbon cutting for Cohesion Phenomics, attended the Chairman/Mayors & Managers lunch meeting, attended a 211 Advisory Board meeting, toured Trelleborg, and attended the regional County Managers meeting in Asheville.

Economic Development:

The Executive Director attended the ribbon cutting at the Revenue Department; presented and received approval of a project related resolution at the Ruth Town Commissioners meeting; prepared press releases for upcoming events including a new business ribbon cutting and deed transfer event; attended the Department Heads meeting; prepared and presented an overview of the economic development process to the East Rutherford High School Junior States of America club and freshman civics class; attended the ribbon cutting and open house for Cohesion Phenomics; attended and participated in the Workforce Development Board meeting; organized, attended and participated in the "Leadership Meeting" at the Trelleborg Coated Systems US, Inc. facility in Rutherfordton; followed up on an existing industry expansion project; and conducted a meeting with an existing business to discuss possible plans for expansion in Rutherford County. The Economic Development Assistant collected and input data for the building permit report; prepared and submitted the monthly safety report; prepared and invoiced the Department of Commerce for NC LITE UP help desk operations; distributed a press release; issued an invitation and worked with Horsehead to coordinate details for upcoming event; attended the Leadership meeting at Trelleborg; and reviewed grant documentation.

Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

The Fire Marshal worked on the regional grant for 800MHz radios for fire departments not included in a previous grant, conducted two origin and cause investigations, and worked on map and information for the addition of the third fire station for Cliffside Area Fire Department adjacent to the Horsehead facility. The Deputy Fire Marshal attended a search and rescue training class.

Finance:

The Finance Office is working closely with departments and vendors to update vendor files with E-Verify data as required by new legislation. The auditor is here working to complete the final pieces of the audit. The Director and Assistant Director attended the regular board meeting for the County Commissioners, and attended the department head meeting with members of the NCACC. Staff is working with Human Resources to process longevity pay this week.

Human Resources:

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. Welcome new employees Connie Daziel (TDA), Jacklyn Gillespie (TDA), and welcome back Deb McCormick (TDA). Employees who have left the service of Rutherford County are Lydia Waddell (911), and Andrew Gualtney (Detention). The Director and staff attended a LGERS implementation conference call for long term disability, attended the Revenue Department ribbon cutting, and attended the regular board meeting of the County Commissioners. Continuing the week, the HR Director met with Angela Ezell of the Senior Center, met with representatives from PNC, and attended the department head meeting/tour with members of the NCACC. Lastly, the Director, met with Michelle Whitaker of TDA, attended the JCPC meeting, and attended a grants committee meeting.

Information Technology:

The IT Department continues working on data migration for the Revenue Department. IT staff have been busy with the Revenue Department as they are transitioning back to the Courthouse. Progress on VOIP is doing well. The Director and staff attended the special meeting and regular scheduled Board meeting on Monday. The Director also attended the ribbon cutting for the Revenue Department, as well as, the department head meeting/tour with guests from NCACC. As a reminder, please submit a trackit if you have requests for IT. Staff is low at this point, and the trackit not only serves as the request but as a reminder as well. A department meeting is scheduled for November 19 @ 10:00 to review the phones in each office. A department head or representative needs to attend. Over the next few weeks, as work is performed on the phones, each department will experience some phone interruption on the multi line phones. Finally, a big thank you to all for the thoughts and prayers during my surgery. Good news—they think they have fixed the problem, at least for another 10 years.

Library:

The Director attended a ribbon cutting for the Revenue Department's newly renovated space, and a department head meeting with staff from the NCACCA. Representative Kelly Braddock, from the State Library, came for a site visit to all three county libraries.

Public Works/Planning:

The garage had 13 preventative maintenance service calls, 10 repairs, 5 tire service calls and 5 other repairs, with two accidents where EMS ambulances hit doors at Spindale and Cliffside. Maintenance completed 28 work orders and repairs along with preventative maintenance, de-winterizing park facilities and fall pruning and groundskeeping of all County facilities and grounds. During the commissioners meeting budget amendments were approved for the water heater replacement at the detention center in addition to approval for paving contracts for Greyrock projects 7 and parts of 8 and 9. The ribbon cutting ceremony of the newly renovated Revenue Department was a success and the facility looks very nice and reflects a professional office. The Board of Commissioners held a special meeting just before the moratorium ended approving the Ordinance for Solar Farm Development. Blake Bostic is the newest addition to the planning staff as Project Manager and is learning quickly as we take time for training and introducing him to the many projects and plans currently active. Lastly, the department's day with reps from the NCACC was very beneficial by providing some fresh eyes and input on much of the way our County does business. Constructive criticism is always welcome from these professional colleagues.

Greyrock Project 3B is completed with the exception of the two retaining walls. Project 8 has been graded to the first intersection which now has stone. The contractor is continuing to the end of Project 8 now. This should be completed in about a month. Project 9 is 75% complete. The culvert in the stream has been installed. Project 4 Paving is completed. Parts of Project 7, 8 & 9 paving bids were opened awarded at the November meeting. This work will be completed by Thanksgiving and will be the last paving project.

Queens Gap Updates: Project 1 contractor is mobilizing. Work to begin next week. Project 2 bid opening will need to be rebid due to the low bidder failing to advertise in the Daily Courier as required by the bid documents. Water system design is nearly complete. Water bids will be opened in early spring of 2014. Bid package is being prepared for Project 3. Project 4 & 5 plans are underway.

Register of Deeds:

This week, the Register of Deeds office had an active week with 380 recordings and collected \$17,025.00.

The Revenue Department answered 262 phone calls, and assisted 189 citizens who came in to the office (2 being PUV). 90 deeds were recorded and 46 were transferred. 6 estates were transferred and 28 new accounts were set up. Mapping completed 1 split, 1 merge, 1 acreage adjustment and created 2 new maps. 5 new E911 addressees were assigned and 1 new road was created. Ownership of 11 addressees was updated. The GIS website had 191,361 hits and 125,919 successful searches. Appraisers completed 297 field reviews and 153 building permits. Electronic payments consisted of 48 by credit/debit, 142 by website, and 13 by phone. 566 citizens came in to pay at the counter. Enforced collection action consisted of 3 Debt Setoff and 1 attachment 23 Deeds were certified. Staff worked 5 bankruptcy payments/issues, 10 discoveries, 32 releases, and 7 refunds. 616 pieces of mail were received and processed. 4945 Feb motor vehicles renewals were processed and 5973 Aug. Staff enjoyed the ribbon cutting and we hope everyone had a great time. Congratulations to Sherry Lavender who will assume the position of Revenue Director January 1, 2014.

Senior Center:

The Senior Center staff asked the participants to wear purple each Monday in November in support of National Alzheimer's Disease month. We will have a special program on Thursday, November 14, about "Interacting with Someone Who Has Alzheimer's Disease". On Wednesday, Eddie Russell presented a Karate/Self-Defense Demonstration. The seniors observed self-defense techniques and simple effective ways to protect themselves. Also, the Medicare Part D Annual Election Period continues until Dec. 7, and SHIP, the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program, can help Medicare beneficiaries compare plans. The Senior Center has SHIP counselors that are available to help. Call for an appointment to talk with our trained SHIP counselors. The main number is 287-6409.

Social Services:

On Tuesday, the newly organized weekly case staffing for CPS cases involving mental health and substance abuse issues was held. In addition to DSS staff, staff from Smokey Mountain Center and local providers attended. On Wednesday, the Director attended the quarterly department head meeting in the morning, followed by a visit from Alissa Willet with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCAC). A discussion was held with Ms. Willet about NC FAST and how it has affected the work and business practices of the agency; and how we prepared for and continue implementation. This meeting was followed by a lunch meeting at the Annex where visitors from NCACC shared what they had learned from their department visits. Also on Wednesday, the Director and the Fiscal Officer attended the monthly State DSS fiscal conference call; the IM Administration attended the weekly NC FAST conference call; and Jill Hamrick and Lisa Edwards attended IV-E training. On Thursday, Adult Services staff members, Vic Martin, Ann Padgett, and Hope Bailey, attended Involuntary Commitment (IVC). Training at McDowell Community College; and the Director attended the 2-1-1 Advisory Board meeting at the United Way building. On Thursday evening, the annual DSS Adoption Banquet was held at the Carolina Event and Conference Center. This banquet recognizes and honors all of the adoptive and foster parents in the county that serve our children.

Soil and Water:

Staff attended the Farmland Preservation and District Board meetings. The Admin/Education Specialist attended the Department Head meeting with the NCACC Staff and completed the Agenda and information folders for the Farmland Preservation Board Meeting and the Rutherford District Board Meeting. The Ag Cost Share Technician started 1 new contract and 1 Request for Payment, went on 3 farm visits, and attended the State Land Judging competition.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 302 customers, hauled 56 loads from centers, shipped 34 loads to Lenoir and sent out one recycling truck. The Director attended the weekly update with Carl Classen, David Odom and Paula Roach. The Director also attended the department head meeting and had a site visit with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, worked with the camera installers and IT Department on getting the cameras installed. The landfill staff are busy repairing a few minor problems that the state inspector noticed at the south landfill during his recent inspection.

Tourism:

Join us as we welcome two new part-time employees Connie Daziel and Jacklyn Gillespie , who will be greeting guests at the Visitors Center . Also, welcome back Deborah McCormick, as she is returning to this position on an occasional basis. We are very glad to have them all! Final preparations are being made for Tuesday's Alliance Luncheon, especially for our "instant movie" which will premiere Tuesday, for guest speaker Susan Dosier will speak, and for our annual report, to be presented in an interactive manner! Go to tdaalliance.com to register for one of the remaining free slots.

Transportation Services:

EMS: This week EMS Personnel responded to 138 emergency calls and 79 convalescent calls. A quarterly supervisors' meeting was held and background checks were run on new employees. **Transit:** Transit drove 10,889 miles, completed 982 local trips and 89 out of county trips, transported 264 unduplicated passengers and collected \$18,660 in revenue. A public hearing was conducted at the County Commissioners' Meeting on Monday night for a Community Transportation Grant to NCDOT. This grant will provide \$407,530 to assist with administrative and capital costs in the FY14-15 budget.

Veterans Office:

Staff made 220 contacts, received 91 telephone interviews, and had 34 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer continues to help veterans with food from the food pantry. As Christmas fastly approaches, the Veterans Office has the **Toys for Totes Box**. Please help in filling these boxes to give to local children in need at Christmas.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

THE MOST SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT OF ALL

- Congratulations to Madison Ruff, Jason Ruff's 13 year old daughter, who is now **CANCER FREE!!!** We praise along with the Ruff family for her recovery and continued good health.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT RIBBON CUTTING



Congratulations to Sherry Lavender (right corner holding ribbon) who will assume the position of Revenue Director January 1, 2014.

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